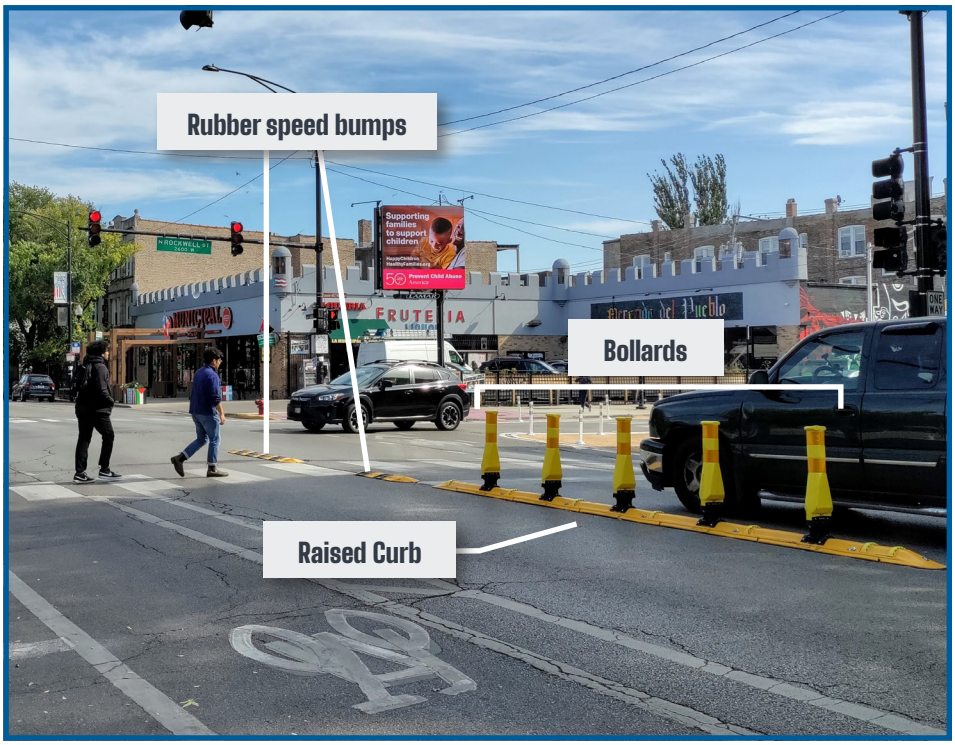
Left Turn Traffic Calming

Left Turn Traffic Calming (LTTC) **encourages safer turning behaviors from drivers and boosts pedestrian safety at intersections.** Beginning with the State Street corridor in the busy River North area, CDOT installed LTTC at five intersections in 2019. Seeing positive results, 13 more locations were installed at high pedestrian crash intersections. Data from LTTC intersections show drivers making safer turning movements, yielding to people in crosswalks, and overall crash reduction. LTTC treatments are an emerging national best practice, showing tangible results in New York, Portland, Washington, DC, and now in Chicago.

How does it work?

LTTC treatments "harden" the centerline at an intersection with raised curbs, bollards, and rubber speed bumps. Some locations may call for a rubber speed bump extending into the intersection or shortened pedestrian crossing distances with paint-and-post curb extensions. This design discourages left turning drivers from cutting across the centerline, guiding them to **turn at a safer angle with slower speeds** and better visibility of people walking. This way, **drivers more intuitively complete their left turns within the safe turning zone**, reducing conflicts with pedestrians.
See diagram on next page.



New LTTC infrastructure at W Division St. and N Rockwell St.

Why focus on left turns?

Reducing traffic crashes is an urgent matter for CDOT. In 2021, more than 500 people were seriously injured or killed in traffic crashes while walking in Chicago. Between 2017 and 2021, **left turning motorists were involved in 40% of crashes where a pedestrian was severely injured or killed at an intersection**. Left turns are more complex than right turns. Drivers must search for gaps in oncoming traffic, pedestrians can be blocked from view by the vehicle's "A-pillar", and the wider turning path enables higher speeds.

Complex Maneuvers

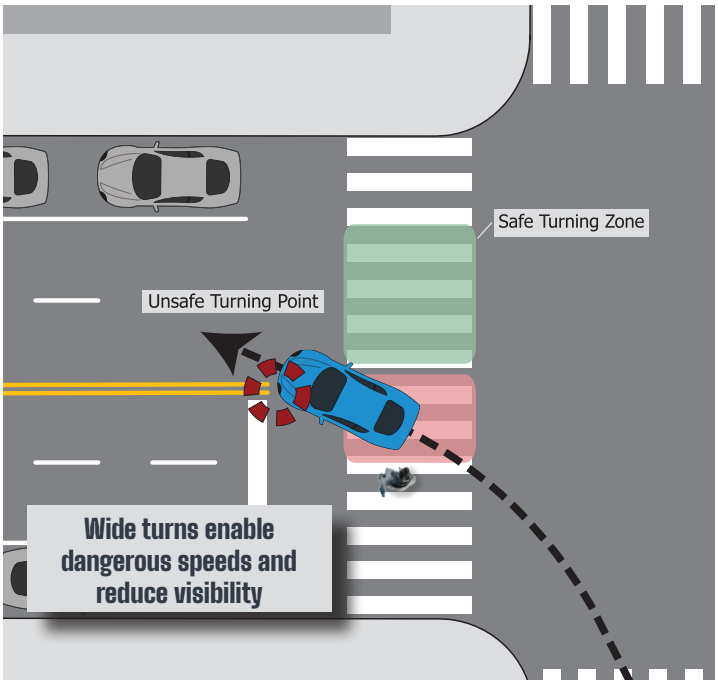
Low Visibility

Wider Turning Paths

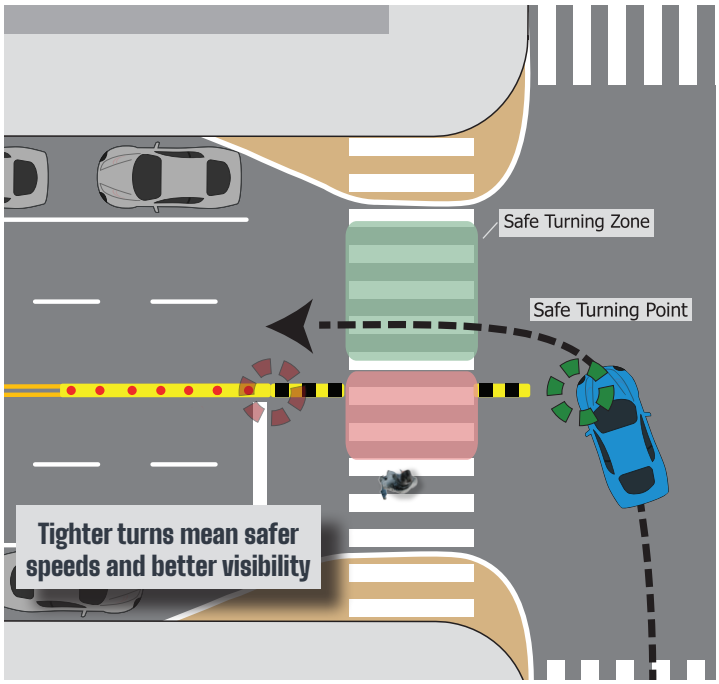
Measuring success

CDOT has installed LTTC at 18 intersections across the city, including neighborhoods such as Belmont Cragin, Englewood, Humboldt Park, and Ravenswood. Observations at eight pilot locations showed **97% of vehicles turning within the Safe Turning Zone, up from 73% before the installations**.

Before Installations



After Installations



Portion of drivers yielding to people walking:

73% of interactions before installations → **94%** of interactions after installations

Portion of drivers turning within the safe zone:

73% before installations → **97%** after installations

> "I walk my dog across Ashland daily... With the [left turn traffic calming] improvements, I can safely step forward and look for oncoming vehicles. Also, because I am more visible crossing the street, vehicles are much more likely to slow down, and many even stop."
>
> *Ravenswood resident, regarding LTTC installations at N Ashland Ave & W Sunnyside Ave*

Reduction in traffic crashes on State Street:

↓ **24%** reduction in left turn crashes

↓ **24%** reduction in total crashes

Chicago's first LTTC treatments were installed at five adjacent pilot intersections along State Street in the River North area.

Crashes at these intersections reduced by 24% whereas similar intersections on the same corridor did not see any reduction in crashes involving left turning vehicles.

LTTC installations at N State St & E Grand Ave